

From the Skeel Family

It is with great sadness we share with you the passing of our beloved husband, father and grandfather, Robert “Bob” Skeel. Bob, age 73, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family on November 1, 2021, in Phoenix, Arizona, after a 6-month battle with brain cancer (Glioblastoma). Bob is survived by his wife of 52 years, Marjorie, and two daughters, Virginia (Patrick Flynn) and Christine (Boris Medanic). He was a grandfather to four: Nina, Leo, Stella, and Charlotte. Bob was born in Calgary, Alberta in 1947 to Genevie and Arthur. He grew up in Edmonton, Alberta with his three siblings, Margaret, Shirley, and Linda. Bob graduated with a Ph.D. in Computing Science from University of Alberta in 1974. He accepted a visiting position at the University of Illinois (U of I) Computer Science Department in 1974, and moved with Marge and the girls to Champaign, Illinois. After a year he was offered a permanent position and became a Full Professor in 1986. Bob retired from the U of I in 2004 and took a position with Purdue University as a Professor of Computing Science and Mathematics (2004-2017). During that time Bob and Marge lived in West Lafayette, Indiana. After retiring from Purdue in 2017, Bob and Marge moved to Phoenix, Arizona to be close to their daughter, Christine, and enjoy a warmer climate. In Phoenix, he worked as an Adjunct Faculty in Mathematical and Statistical Sciences at Arizona State University. Throughout his career Bob authored many journal articles, book chapters, and published a textbook. He also enjoyed mentoring several Ph.D. students.

Bob loved travel and adventure and took the opportunities he was given for work sabbaticals in England, Spain, and San Diego. He was also involved in many professional activities; organizing and leading workshops and organizing and speaking at conferences around the world, including in England, Scotland, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, France, Greece, Switzerland, Nigeria, Mexico, China, Japan, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Australia, and throughout the U.S. Marge accompanied him on many of these trips and they both enjoyed traveling together and exploring the world.

Along with his life-long love of mathematics, Bob was a devote Christian and joined or attended a church wherever he lived. His faith guided his life, his decisions, and his behavior toward others. When his sister once asked him why he believed in God, as they were standing on a beautiful green campus, he swept his arm and said, “Look around!” Bob volunteered regularly at Phoenix Rescue Mission through Christ Church Anglican in Phoenix and was a member of the men’s breakfast group and hiking group through his church. Bob was also an active member of the Scottsdale Newcomers Group, and Bob and Marge hosted many social events in their home. Bob cared about his impact on the environment, reducing and reusing wherever possible. He rode his bike to work for many years while living in Champaign.

Bob was kind, generous, and always strived to keep his word. One enjoyed his company as he was thoughtful and considerate to those around him. His face often lit up with a smile when he saw or heard something that pleased him. He was mindful and gave forethought and planning to his life and his interactions with others. He had a love of learning and teaching. His sisters remember their older brother teaching them about

politics, geography, chemistry, biology, and astronomy when they were young. Bob continued his love of teaching with his two children and with his students. His daughters also remember his enthusiasm for games, travel, and adventures. Other hobbies that Bob enjoyed were chess, cards, board games, and hiking. He loved good food and looked forward to “Sunday Dinner” with his family every week after church. In addition to family, Bob leaves behind his friends from Champaign-Urbana, West Lafayette, and Phoenix. We will always love him and miss him. The good memories will continue to make us grateful to have been a part of his life.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Bob’s name to a charity that he believed in and donated to regularly: Doctors Without Borders (www.doctorswithoutborders.org).

